Professional Communicators and Mouthpiece Operators:
Dual Identity of Chinese Journalists in CCTV

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ABSTRACT

Chinese journalism is greatly influenced by journalistic professionalism in the era of economic transformation, which causes a problem of identity switch among journalists. By examining the negotiation between two kinds of identities: professional communicators and mouthpiece operators, this study discusses the interaction between the existed propagandist media paradigm and the newly emerging professionalism. Based on field study in a news program in CCTV (China Central Television) and discourse analysis on its news products, this study concludes that journalists are highly aware of their mouthpiece role but also adept at professional skills in their news reporting. The findings consist of three parts: first, the discourse analysis on news productions could help generate a new mouthpiece style at work, which allows journalists to be critical on news events and meanwhile play safe in Party line; second, the sense of professionalism and the self fulfillment mainly grows in a forbidden zone attributed to conflicts among different interest groups rather than the state control; third, journalists in newsrooms have been exposed to an ideological training from their superior.
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